

HOUSE BILL 3449

By Rinks

AN ACT to name State Route 421 in Decatur and Hardin counties in honor of the late Senior Master Sergeant Franklin R. Bledsoe, United States Air Force, Retired.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor the memory of those courageous members of the United States Armed Forces who made great sacrifices in the defense of our nation; and

WHEREAS, no soldier is more deserving of this honor than the late Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt.) Franklin R. Bledsoe, United States Air Force, Retired; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean, Senior Master Sergeant Franklin R. Bledsoe proudly served his country with courage, honor, and integrity in the United States Air Force for 23 years, including a tour of duty in Vietnam in 1971-1972; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from military duty, Senior Master Sergeant Franklin R. Bledsoe, bought a farm in the Hinkle Community of Hardin County and raised livestock; and

WHEREAS, this exemplary soldier passed away quite appropriately on Independence Day 2006, leaving behind a singular legacy of patriotism, courage, and devotion to duty; and

WHEREAS, Senior Master Sergeant Franklin R. Bledsoe 's valiant service in the military and his love of his family, his fellow citizens, and his country, as exemplified in his heroic service in defense of all that he held dear, stand as enduring examples of all the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly wishes to name a highway that passes through the Hinkle community to permanently commemorate Senior Master Sergeant Franklin R. Bledsoe 's life of purpose and commitment as an officer in the United States Air Force; now, therefore,
BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, State Route 421 in its entirety (lying in Decatur and Hardin counties) is hereby designated the "SMSgt. Franklin R. Bledsoe Memorial Highway" as a lasting tribute to an officer and gentleman who served his country courageously and with great personal sacrifice in Vietnam and around the globe.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating State Route 421 as the "SMSgt. Franklin R. Bledsoe Memorial Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall become operative only if the cost of the manufacture and installation of such signs is paid to the department of transportation from non-state funds within one (1) year of the effective date of this act. Such payment shall be made prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to the person or entity paying for such signs within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, an amount equal to the difference in such costs shall be remitted to the department in non-state funds within thirty (30) days of the sponsoring person or entity receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.